

Concern

Special Edition on
The Youth Emphasis



Cover Photo

A youth leader from Kansas, Nancy Livingston, received the first copy of the Methodist Youth Emphasis reading book *I Believe*. Former president of the Central Kansas Conference MYF and now student at Southwestern College in Winfield, Kans., Nancy is a representative youth on the Emphasis advisory committee.

For the word on the Lenten reading project of the MYF and the current church-wide Youth Emphasis, read the articles in this special issue of CONCERN.

Concern for youth

The Methodist General Conference of 1952 called the entire church to enlist in a church-wide quadrennial emphasis on youth for the two-fold purpose of helping youth discover the will of God for their lives and of reaching unchurched youth for Christ.

The General Advisory Committee on the Youth Emphasis has set a church-wide goal of 500,000 new members in the youth division of local churches (Methodist Youth Fellowship) in the 1952-56 quadrennium. If the goal is to be achieved it must be uppermost in the mind and heart of every Christian youth in every church in Methodism. It will also require the consecrated leadership of the pastors and the continuous effort of adult workers with youth and of young people who are leaders among the youth of the church.

This issue of CONCERN includes the calendar for 1954, bringing to the attention of these leaders some of the possibilities for interesting and profitable activities by, with and for youth in all Methodist churches.

The General Advisory Committee on the Youth Emphasis, which is composed of bishops, district superintendents, pastors, young people and adult leaders of youth, has called all who are concerned for youth to enter into a covenant of daily prayer for youth.

The basic fact of the Youth Emphasis is the Sunday after Sunday program of the MYF. The calendar contains ideas and suggestions designed to strengthen the activities and program in the local churches.

A choice friend: Nevin C. Harner

—CONCERN ASKED PERCY R. HARWARD, FAMED EDITOR, WRITER A FRIEND OF YOUTH, TO INTRODUCE LATE NEVIN C. HARNER, WHOSE BOOK "I BELIEVE" IS BEING WIDELY USED THE METHODIST YOUTH EMPHASIS READING BOOK FOR LENT. HIS TRIBUTE ADDRESSED TO DR. HARNER.

Your face looks out at me from the jacket of your book as you looked us when with us in fellowship and service. That smile seems just about break and broaden and deepen—as used to do. We have missed it—a you—much indeed.

I knew you in the warm comradeship of our many Protestant bodies in the International Council of Religious Education. Your spirit helped to create a climate in which the National Council of Churches of today could be nurtured. You were courageous and cheerful.



Harner

when hard decisions had to be made when old patterns had to be broken when new insights and openings called for a larger vision in which to fashion God's purpose for Christian education. You could debate the difference with breaking fellowships win a decision without arrogance out-voted and flash that same spirit. And in your own denomination were the same as with the rest of the world. For Christian character like yours is the same everywhere.

This book of yours was at my desk as soon as in print, to help in the service I wrote each week for young people of many denominations. It helped and will help many.

I knew you best once at long range when a young minister of your church who had been in your classes told me ways in which you had entered deeply into his heart and work. You will be the same for the Methodist young people who are to read your book in the Lenten season. It will do their minds and souls good.

God bless them as they share your Christian Faith for Youth.

1954 Youth Emphasis Calendar

Late Winter and Spring

Lenten Reading Project, March 2-18.

vin Harner's *I Believe*.

is special book for youth has been
ished as a means of helping to
y and strengthen the faith of
odist youth.

is a clear, convincing statement of
ith for youth. Every Methodist
n should have a copy of the Bible
of *I Believe* for personal reading
meditation during the Lenten sea-
It is being published at a greatly
ed price in order that every youth
have his personal copy.

Reaching New Members for the
odist Youth Fellowship.

e over-all goal for 39,000 Metho-
churches in four years is 500,000.

bruary — Pastor, church school
rintendent and adult workers with
h study the possibilities for growth
e Methodist Youth Fellowship. Call
ther leaders among young people.
out how many youth there are in
ommunity who should be in your
odist Youth Fellowship. This will
de every youth in the church fam-
who are not members of the
odist Youth Fellowship and as
y unchurched youth of the com-
ty as possible. This is the ideal
a for your church, but you and
young people decide upon your
of new members in the Methodist
h Fellowship by the end of 1955.
rt this number to your district
rintendent. Make plans for active
t to reach them and enlist them
membership in the Methodist Youth
wship. Encourage them to make a
itment for Christ and church
bership.

rch — Pastor's training class of
a in preparation for church mem-
ip.

ril — Palm Sunday. Receive youth
children into membership of the
h.

Easter Sunrise Service by and for
n, April 18.

e Methodist Youth Fellowship in
local church is urged to hold an
r sunrise service. This may be-
a culmination of the reading and

study of *I Believe*. Make it a time of
worship by careful advance preparation
through prayer and meditation and
planning of the program for the ser-
vice. Advertise the service. Get every
youth in the church to attend.

★ Improving programs of the Metho- dist Youth Fellowship.

Interesting programs and activities
well attended with all members of the
Methodist Youth Fellowship participat-
ing is a sure way to increase and hold
new members. It is the best possible
way to assimilate youth who are won
for Christ in any kind of evangelistic
program. This, therefore, is a main
line objective of the emphasis on youth.
See *Handbook* for suggestions.

Summer

★ Training for Service.

Training adult workers with youth
and youth leaders should be continuous
but it receives unusual emphasis dur-
ing summer months. Each local church
should see that adult leaders of youth
participate in one or more training
enterprises during the summer months.
Such training enterprises as these are
within reach of workers in most local
churches:

- ◆ Institutes and training classes
in local churches
- ◆ District meetings, conferences
and training schools
- ◆ Summer camps, assemblies
and institutes
- ◆ Regional and Jurisdictional
workshops and convocations
for youth

Note: Ask the executive secretary of
your Conference Board of Education
for dates and places of training enter-
prises.

★ Reaching New Members for the Methodist Youth Fellowship.

The summer months present unusual
opportunities for reaching unchurched
youth for Christ and his church. All it
takes is an evangelistic spirit, a mis-
sionary spirit, a Christ-like spirit of
concern for youth who are not members
of any church and youth in church
families who are not members of
any church and youth in church families

who are not in the MYF. Also, it takes careful planning. If the ground work for reaching new members has not been done, summer is a good time to give attention to it. (See suggestions above for February.)

★ Improving Programs of the Methodist Youth Fellowship.

Continuous effort by adult workers with youth and the youth officers of the Methodist Youth Fellowship to improve the programs and activities of youth will bring vital results in attendance and participation of youth. See *Handbook of The Methodist Youth Fellowship* for suggestions.

Autumn and Early Winter

★ Autumn Action Project—Youth in Their Families.

Family responsibility for youth will be emphasized throughout Methodism during October and November.

Such activities as these will be under way throughout the country:

- ◆ National Family Life Conference, October 8-10. To be held in Cleveland, Ohio. Consider sending a delegate from your church.
- ◆ Conference-wide Meetings of Parents of Youth
- ◆ Community (or local church) seminars for parents of teen-agers
- ◆ Youth-Parent panels in the Sunday Evening Fellowship in the local churches
- ◆ Emphasis upon family worship family councils, family at home night, family Bible reading, family study of Sunday school lesson

★ Methodist Youth Fellowship Rally Day, October 3.

Rally Day is observed on October 3 (or some other Sunday in September or October) by the entire church school. Let the Methodist Youth Fellowship get in on planning for Rally Day in a big way. Make it count for rallying the old members, bringing back those who have been absent, and reaching new members. Program suggestions will be available by September 1 from the General Board of Education.

★ Methodist Youth Fellowship Thanksgiving Service, November 25.

Let the young people plan a great family Thanksgiving night service at the church. There might be a light supper, fun, fellowship, singing, speaking,

worship. Program suggestions will be available in the *Sourcebook*.

★ Family Workshop in the Home December 25.

Christmas is distinctively a family day. Make the most of the presence of the sons and daughters who have returned from school. Put Christmas in every home. See *Christmas Worship in the Home* for suggestions.

★ Methodist Youth Fellowship Watch Night Service, December 31

Plan for and hold a watch night service with, for, and by youth and their families. Hundreds of thousands of Methodist youth will be gathered in their churches with their brothers and sisters and parents in every nook and corner of our country as the old year closes and the new year is ushered in. The bishops of our church have prepared a prayer for youth which may be used as a part of this service. Our suggestions will be available by December 1 from the General Board of Education.

★ Reaching New Members for Methodist Youth Fellowship.

Make big use of these special suggestions during the autumn months as a means of keeping and building attendance and membership in the Methodist Youth Fellowship. Make good preparation for

Promotion Sunday, September 1

Alert the intermediate departments of the Sunday school to the coming

Concern

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Concern is published every other week by the National Conference of Methodist Youth, P. O. Box 871, Nashville 2, Tenn. Richard Thompson, president; Jeff Campbell, vice president; Jean Stevenson, recording secretary; Kenneth Thompson, Jr., financial secretary.

The editorial policy of Concern as set by the National Conference of Methodist Youth is the Social Creed of The Methodist Church, adopted by the General Conference and printed in the Discipline.



Entered as second class matter September 1942 at the post office at Nashville, Tennessee, under the Act of March 2, 1879. Subscription price: one year, \$1; renewal, \$1; foreign, \$1.50.

boys and girls from the junior department into the intermediate department. Be ready for them with additional leaders and class-rooms. Make them welcome from the beginning. Give particular attention to the evening program for intermediates. Let us make special efforts to hold every one of our boys and girls for Christ and church and for membership in the Methodist Youth Fellowship.

Improving Programs of the Methodist Youth Fellowship.

The Handbook is chock full of suggestions for improving the activities of the Methodist Youth Fellowship. Read it; read it; use it. Also draw upon suggestions in *Workers with Youth*. Get and use *Your Church Can and Hold Young People*.

Lent

To study faith

What can I believe?

That's the question! It's one that many people are asking, especially during Lent.

The Lenten reading project, a special project in the quadrennial Youth Conference, offers Methodist youth and interested adults the opportunity to read and think about this question. To help them in doing this, an outstanding book, in a handy pocket-size edition, will be available. It is *I Believe* by Dr. C. Harner. It discusses "a Christian faith for youth." It's yours for only 35 cents each. Your group can order ten or more copies for only 35 cents each.

One of the three great needs which are being tackled especially during the four years is to strengthen the faith of Methodist youth, by studying Christian beliefs, what a Methodist believes, the history of the church, and the meaning and practice of prayer. An active MYFer in Iowa declared recently, "Sure, that's a need. Being a Christian really makes a difference."

Sunday school classes and evening meetings of the Methodist Youth Fellowship should constantly help to meet this need (see *Youth Planbook*). The Lenten reading project is an extra, a special help, in helping youth and in-

terested adults to understand better the Christian way. Dr. Harner's book, widely accepted for several years in a more expensive edition, discusses with youth who Jesus is, what God is like, what man is, the Bible, the church, death and immortality, the Kingdom and other topics. He definitely wrote for young people.

The book and project are designed primarily for personal reading and meditation, along with reading your Bible. It might be discussed informally in groups, but it should *not* take the place of the regular Sunday morning and evening curriculum materials.

Talk about it in your youth council. Make posters about it. Put copies on sale where you can contact young people when they come to the church. Write letters to your young people. Put announcements about it in the church bulletin and paper and in the local newspapers. A newspaper mat of the cover of the book is available free and a 2"x3" cut of the cover is available for \$2.00 from the Youth Department, Box 871, Nashville, Tenn. Announce it every Sunday for awhile.

Order a copy for every senior high and older youth and every adult worker with youth; plus a quantity for interested parents and others in the church because of their interest in the subject and in youth work. Also, copies ought to be purchased and sent to young people of the local church who are in military service and in college. Copies should be put in the public library, if possible, and in the church library.

Free Leaflet Out

A leaflet describing the project and outlining its possibilities is available free from the Youth Department (order No. 2400-B).

Send your order now to the Methodist Publishing House serving your church. You can order the book on consignment if you want to—sell the copies and then pay for them.

Here's a rich opportunity to help the youth and their adult friends in your church to become stronger in their Christian faith. *You* take the initiative in helping this project click in *your* church.

—BY JOSEPH W. BELL

Youth in their families

The Fall action project in the Youth Emphasis for 1954 focuses on teen-agers in their families. It will feature activity in three areas, the home, the church, and the community, helping youth and their families find the will of God and live by it. November is set aside for this phase of the emphasis.

In spite of the pressures of modern life, the *family* is still the strongest unit in the social structure. It is also the most deeply influential on the growth of children and youth. To reach youth for Christ in most cases means that the parents must be reached as well. Parents and youth need help on how to work, live and grow together as Christians successfully, and they are usually responsive to honest efforts to give that help.

An MYF group can work effectively with families of teen-agers in their church and community through *projects* such as these: promote regular family devotions, regular family council to talk things over, better mutual understanding between teeners and parents, set up continuing parents meetings, work for more family get-togethers like family-at-home-night, encourage weekday preparation for Sunday School, and family attendance at worship services. The most lasting results will come from establishing study and fellowship groups of parents, and of youth and parents, which will continue through the years.

In this project materials will be suggested for *Panel discussions*. The panel might be composed of parents, youth and parents, or even "experts." There would be many good topics, like "What's Wrong With Parents," "Youth as Emerging Adults," "Allowance vs. Earning," "What Time to Come Home?" or "How Much Freedom?". Members of the panel and the moderator would hope to draw the entire group into the discussion.

Another fine technique for helping families is through *drama*. When one associates himself with a character who works out a problem, he learns to work out his own. The script for a skit of an average family in its weekly "family council" is already finished. Another is being prepared to show how a family shares a devotional time. A group of skits are to present problems of teen-agers and their families to stimulate discussion with the audience. Most of the short skits that will be available will be simple to produce, requiring a minimum of dramatic training and staging for presentation. They would be usable in a one-room church.

Sunday School materials will reflect the emphasis. The *Roundtable* evening unit for November is "Young Folks Home," and *Christian Action*, for old youth, has two relating sessions. Intermediate will be studying a unit on the home. *Christian Home* magazine will devote most of an issue to materials for parents and parent groups. Many families with teen-agers will be wanting to study their lessons the same evening, especially during this period.

A *film* is being produced for showing to church groups. The original dramatic script has been written, with shooting scheduled for the spring months. Premier showing will be at the National Methodist Family Conference in Cleveland in October. It is the story of the Altons, a family with three children, 17, 14 and 10, and how they grow as Christians.

National and local radio and television possibilities are being investigated, and it is hoped that several programs could be produced.

An effective way to help teeners and their families in the church is through sermons by the pastor. His attitude and his witness can go far in leading the adults in the congregation to become

of the problem, and begin to do something about it.

Family Recreation Planned

Leaflet is being prepared to help families with recreation on their "family-at-home night." It will be available in the summer. Many families with teen-agers don't even visit together, much less fellowship together. I wonder, then, that those youth go to others than their parents with their problems. Families that play together can talk out problems together, and will grow faster as Christians.

Families can help teen-agers mature as they share with others. To help a family with clothing, food, medicine, and loving encouragement can be a fine experience. It makes more people our sharing with individuals and the world. Missions is actually simple and their problems. World-mindedness comes to teen-agers as they share with people over the globe. Families can "adopt an orphan" in a mission station, put a native youth through mission school, give to "Meals for Missions" or MCOR, and support the Fund and World Service.

Certain projects in the community help youth and their families grow with. The attitude of the community has a strong influence on families, but families can help communities to a better understanding. The discussion skits and panels mentioned above could be a program of the PTA, Dad's Club, League, Lions, Kiwanis, Rotary, service club or lodge. They could also provide an evening program for a public meeting, or share the spotlight with an outstanding speaker on family-life-with-children. Family meals in public should be just as sacred as at home. Saying grace is in good taste in restaurants and cafes. An MYF or district MYF could encourage operators of eating establishments to suggest on menus that grace at the table is appropriate. In some towns a grace is printed on the menu that is acceptable to Protestant, Roman Catholic and Jewish families.

These Should Do It

Who's job is it to see that some of these projects are carried out in local churches? The pastor is "in charge," and usually works through the com-

mission on education. The Council of the MYF is also responsible for the youth program. However, since this project involves adults also, the commission on education might designate a few adults (perhaps representing the adult class or classes) to join with the MYF council for planning this emphasis.

For conference, district and sub-district meetings, the proper council and adult workers are responsible. However, since the arena for major action is in many individual homes, projects beyond the local church should be planned to help local church leaders work more effectively in their churches. This might be done by giving demonstrations of the discussion skits, sharing ideas on "how we plan to do it in our church," training pastors in marriage counseling, training panel discussion leaders, or planning for large programs or rallies.

Leaflet Will Give Details

Where will the detailed information on these projects be found? A pamphlet on "Youth In Their Families" will be out in early summer that will point out major resources. These are to be carried in regular Methodist channels. For example, suggestions for projects beyond the local church will be carried in KIT, the bulletin for that purpose. September *Roundtable* will contain the main body of instructions to MYF councils, and September *Workers With Youth* will have guidance for adult workers. There will be one or more sermons in *Pastor* magazine. *Shepherds* and *Power* will give guidance on family worship with teen-agers. CONCERN will carry news items related to the emphasis, as will other Methodist news publications, *Methodist Woman*, *Pastor's Journal*, and *World Outlook*, will help with an interpretation of family sharing.

What to do now? Set aside the month of November on the calendar of the local church. Let youth-in-their-families have the center of the stage. Decide to use every resource to help youth where they live most and most need help. Then, keep your eyes open for materials as they come out, plan projects carefully, and carry them out effectively.

—BY WALLACE CHAPPELL

NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF Methodist youth

Box 871, Nashville 2, Tennessee



Projects Secretaries:
George Harper
Jameson Jones

A MEMO TO EVERY MEMBER OF THE MYF:

Winter. Time when everybody urges you to check up on your affairs: "Better get that oil check-up now, Mr.", or "the class will have a check-up over chapters one through six next Friday", etc.

Here's ours: It's time for a winter check-up on the MY Fund. How's your MYF doing on its pledge? Have a winter check-up in your next meeting.

To lighten your task, here's what we think such a check-up should include:

- (1) Is your MYF pledge to the MY Fund paid up to date?
- (2) Do you send your MY Fund money to your conference treasurer at the beginning of each month?
- (3) Is your group aiming at paying your pledge in full by April 30 so that the money will have time to go through your conference office and the national office on this year's MY Fund records, which close May 31?
- (4) Is everyone in your MYF really giving all he can?
A billion who cannot read or write,
With two out of three people in the world today constantly hungry,
Does our use of money match the dedication of Christians who stand in the places of real suffering and persecution, and that which we ourselves made upon our entrance into the fellowship of Jesus? Think of the cokes, candy, movies, games, clothes, and food we enjoy in excess.
The next logical point in the check-up, then, and the biggest:
- (5) Will you and your group do more?

A quick MY Fund check-up now, followed by an all-out effort to remedy any faults thereby revealed, including those suggested above, will do five important things:

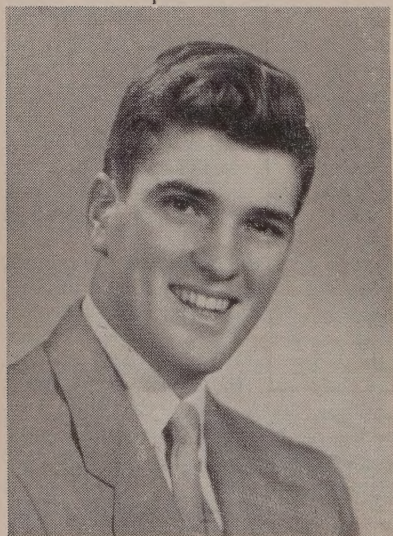
- Help you to see your giving in relation to your Christian stewardship
- Keep the Youth Fund growing
- Show the adults of the church that our generation means business
- Give meaning to our motto, "Christ Above All"
- And, most important, give life and hope to people who must have our help to exist, and give it in the name of Jesus Christ

"Inasmuch as you do it for one of the least of these my brothers, you do it for me."

Yours in His Fellowship,

Dick Thompson
Richard Thompson
President

In cooperation with
Board of Education, Board of Missions, Board of Temperance,
Board of Evangelism, and Board of World Peace of The Methodist Church



YOUTH FUND NEEDS YOU--NOW!

If you were a Navajo citizen of the United States, living in Arizona or Mexico, you would be extremely interested in the Methodist Youth Fund. As a Christian, you would pray for Methodist youth to have their hearts' purses open for the children of the tribe.

Because you would know that only one Navajo child in two has a chance to live to be six years of age. There is one chance in three that he can get an education . . . Eighty per cent of the population cannot read or write. Yes, in the United States—today!

★ ★

Let the members of your MYF only know, not only about the Navajos and the Methodist Youth Fund is going there, but about dozens of other special spots of human need around the world, they would more than raise their "pledge" to the MYFund this year, wouldn't they?

★ ★

Well, you get the information for free. Check this list to see if you can use some of these materials to your advantage:

The Methodist Youth Fund Bulletin, published quarterly to give you news about what the Youth Fund is doing and why.

One Minute Please, an eye-catching poster with some quick facts (like the paragraph about the Navajos) to stir interest in the MYFund. You could put one of these into the hands of each young person, 12 to 23, in your church.

How To Promote MYFund, a handbook of good ways to promote the fund in your group.

Windows of the World, an MYFund dramatization which could be acted out by members of your group. Dramatic but not too complicated.

My Fund and Yours, filmstrip with sound recording and script, 11 minutes. Costs \$5 from the Methodist Publishing House nearest you, or your conference director of youth work may loan a copy for your use.

Youth Give, a folder to describe three ways youth participate in giving in The Methodist Church:

World Service, MYFund, and Methodist Committee for Overseas Relief.

● *Go Therefore*, a pledge service for seniors and older youth. For use when your group makes its pledge (the total of all personal pledges) for the year. Can be used anytime during the year.

● *God's World*, an MYFund pledge service for intermediates. Don't forget that intermediates are part of the MYF and share in Youth Fund giving.

● *Personal Pledge Cards*, to be used by each member of your group.

● *Pledge Card for your MYF*, to be sent each year to your conference headquarters and to national headquarters.

● *Record Book for the Local Treasurer*, a big help for keeping your records complete and up-to-date.

★ ★

All the free items are available from the Methodist Youth Fund office, Youth Department, P. O. Box 871, Nashville 2, Tenn.

★ ★

If you want to do something right now—something to help build a more Christian world—start by encouraging every member of your MYF to give as much as possible through the Methodist Youth Fund. Do all you can to help others give. Give as much yourself, and then give a little more.

KNOW—What the Methodist Youth Fund does in its vital ministry to God's people around the world.

CARE—enough to act!

PLEDGE—faithfully to the Fund, being sure your goals for giving are set high enough.

PAY—regularly, week by week. Remember that the Youth Fund year ends May 31.

A five-point program

There is important business before every MYF in The Methodist Church in the days immediately ahead.

"Business as usual" isn't enough.



Ewing

Every day a larger number of your "kid brothers" and "kid sisters" become youth and are potentially members of your MYF. Your MYF has a responsibility for this growing group of young persons who live in your community.

"Business as usual" isn't enough. The

pressures on your life are growing every minute—more delinquency involving fellows and girls of young generation; peace still eludes the statesman and war continues to threaten; more people are relying on power and faith in things; more are taking moral standards for granted!

Young people of the Methodist Youth Fellowship are faced with one of the greatest challenges and responsibilities of any generation of Christian youth. It is a challenge to join with their adult friends in one of the most creative movements of our times: DEEPEN FAITH; WIN YOUTH TO CHRIST; IMPROVE THE MYF.

Doubtless many of you have heard about this challenging movement which is called The Youth Emphasis. What have you done about it? Until each of you realizes that this is a responsibility which you have to make the Youth Emphasis is reality, it will have little meaning for you or the young people of your community and school. In these early weeks of 1954 you and the members of your MYF should give consideration to five important responsibilities which have been outlined in detail in this issue of CONCERN:

1. STRENGTHEN FAITH — make certain that you know what and in

what you believe and why you believe what you believe. Help other youth clarify and strengthen their faith and put it into action. The Lenten reading project is one way that you and your friends can seek to strengthen your faith.

2. WIN YOUTH TO CHRIST — In every community there are young people who are not related to any Christian fellowship. If your faith has any meaning to you, you will want to share it with even non-Christian youth in your community. Make practical and specific plans to reach each young person in your school and community, make them feel welcomed. Make them feel needed.

Concern Feature

3. TRAINED LEADERSHIP — The MYF program grows in proportion to the capable and trained leadership upon the part of your people and adults who work with young people. In your church, community and district there are opportunities for discussion and study to find better ways of leadership. Week-end institutes, leadership schools, retreats, workshops, Christian Witness Missions, summer camps and conferences are but a few of the opportunities you have for training.

4. STRENGTHEN THE FAMILY — During the four months particular attention will be focused on the family and your relations to it and your responsibility as a part of it.

5. IMPROVE THE MYF — Every MYF has resources and tools for making it the finest program for your people in the community. Careful planning and responsibility work upon the part of the total group are needed to make it realize its full potential. This is the challenge before the young people of this generation: TO HELP ALL YOUTH DISCOVER THE WILL OF GOD AND LIVE BY IT.

What will your answer be?

—BY HAROLD W. EWING

Emphasis moves ahead

I believe that this present generation of youth is neither "lost" nor "conquered." It is a generation intellectual, vigorous and morally normal, well qualified to determine the values in what are truly worth while. Young people know that in this modern world cannot be moral and at the same time be unintelligent. Society, despite all, has a moral and religious base. Because older generations lapsed from what was vital in religious experience, youth is resolved to know firsthand the power from on high that redeems as it transforms human life. Youth will accept no substitutes. It is determined to discover the will of God and to live by it.

Bishop Lord

It is my conviction that the goal of 500,000 new members for the Youth Division for this quadrennium is well within reach if we focus our sights and make available the resources of our great church. Youth responds to religion that is relevant and challenging. It shies away from religion that is irrelevant and lacking in reality. I dare to believe that The Methodist Church today possesses the power that can reform the nation, and that youth, when challenged, will respond. We have until now failed to justify my faith.

—BY JOHN WESLEY LORD
Bishop, Boston area

Much to be done

It is really wonderful to see all of the material coming out for the Youth Emphasis! I believe we are beginning to realize that the spotlight really is on youth, and the MYF is assuming the importance in the church program. I believe there is a greater sense of purpose in the MYF. I think that as the Church focuses



Miss Livingston

its eyes on youth, we naturally get more enthused and try to improve our programs and are really putting more meaning into the activities of our fellowships.

However, there is so much more that must be accomplished before we can say that the Youth Emphasis has fulfilled its purpose! This can't be accomplished just by more and better literature, but the Emphasis can only fulfill its purpose as each MYF'er and each adult sincerely dedicates himself to really living the Christian faith. This means being so thrilled with our Christian heritage and our relationships with God that our lives overflow with beauty, sincerity, understanding, and love. Only then, I believe, can we really bring more youth into our church and include them in our program in such a way that they too will know Christ as Savior and Lord.

Yes, the Emphasis is on youth—the Church is looking to and giving support to youth. And now it's up to youth to do our part to help others "Discover the will of God and live by it!"

—BY NANCY LIVINGSTON
Student, Southwestern College,
Winfield, Kans.

No coasting to success

Since I am a three-point preacher, I want to describe the Youth Emphasis by trying to answer three questions:

What does it mean? — What is it doing? — and What can it do?

1. What does the Youth Emphasis mean?

It means that The Methodist Church considers youth extremely important,

and it should since 20% of all Methodists are Youth. This is a good-sized slice of the congregational pie, and the most important slice because it can be with the Church longer.

The competition for this slice of the congregation is far greater today than it was in the yesterdays. If the Church loses its Youth, the congregational pie of tomorrow will be a very meager one. That is the reason for the Youth Emphasis, and it is the most difficult and demanding task in the Church. A Youth program will not coast to success. It will take brains, sweat and tears.



Mayer

We have lost 27,835 in our Youth enrollment since 1948. This trend must be stopped, and we cannot be satisfied until that vast army of unchurched Youth (3 out of 4) are approached, exposed to and won for Christ. This demands a Youth Emphasis.

2. What is the Youth Emphasis doing?

The Methodist Church has focused its attention on Youth. The Youth Department of The General Board of Education has provided Handbooks, Study Books, Guides, Projects and a wealth of material helps (the best ever) which can improve the MYF, win others, and strengthen faith.

I can speak of a successful Youth-in-Focus program in the N-E Ohio Conference (Jan. 1952-June 1953) which among other things produced a 1,500 gain in Youth enrollment.

But the major job is yet ahead.

3. What Can the Youth Emphasis Do?

The program is ambitious, but it needs to be done and what needs to be done, with the help of God, CAN BE DONE.

By 1956, we propose to bring 500,000 new members into the MYF. Each Conference, District and Church will have a quota (that means persons) for its concern and conquest.

By 1956, we propose to enlist 20,000 new adult workers to counsel, teach and work with Youth. These adults are just as much needed as the 500,000 Youth.

By 1956, we propose to develop Youth who have a strong Christian Faith (1954); who understand the importance of family life in the present and for the future (1954); who are trained Churchmen (1955); who are seeking world friendship and peace (1955).

By 1956, we propose to have trained pastors recognizing Youth work as an important part of their ministry—not to be dodged because of difficulties or lack of time.

This to my mind is the Youth Emphasis—What it means? What it is doing? and what it can and must do.

—BY THEODORE C. MAYER

Superintendent, Steubenville District, N. E. Ohio Conference

Explosions do come

As a lay Counselor in the North Iowa Conference I would like to say that Youth Emphasis has placed upon the hearts of the Youth of our Area a real motive. Basically all youth who



Bennett

are exposed to the teachings of Christ went to take the respective places in carrying forward the cause for which Christ gave so much. As so well stated in the Youth Emphasis material, Youth are a part and portion of confused civilization. I see the Youth Emphasis

beginning to stir youth to overcome a fear that they are not wanted in an adult world. All over the country reports are coming of individual and group explosions by which youth are proving their acceptance of Christ and his will in their lives. We are midway in the Youth Emphasis, the last two years will reap results of foundations laid the first two years. It is my belief that youth must be encouraged to expose their dreams, who knows just one dream placed on the heart of a youth might lead the Youth of the world to follow more closely God's call to all. The Youth Emphasis gives a cause to survey more closely the "Home Church" — Youth program, spark us to overcome our weakness and more adequately serve the needs of the Youth. The North Iowa Youth

amed and brought to fruition the
 irth Iowa Traveling Fellowship."
 y visited every local church, or-
 ized MYF's and left materials and
 usiasm to spark SICK SITUA-
 NS. This was a part of their re-
 nse to YOUTH EMPHASIS—they
 not stop with this! They feel
 r Power guided by God, Great
 ings Will Happen in the Lives of
 ividuals in North Iowa in 1954,
 5, Thanks to Youth Emphasis.

—BY ROYAL BENNETT

Youth Counselor, North Iowa
 Conference

Emphasis brings action

The Youth Emphasis is a familiar
 ase in our conference, but it is
 more—it is a vital challenge, a deep
 ern for youth, and the expectation
 great accomplishments through the
 F.

The Youth Emphasis has resulted in
 action program. The conference
 ncil members studied its purpose
 d objectives, then set goals for 1954.
 ese objectives were discussed with



Miss Craig

and approved by
 Bishop Costen J.
 Harrell and his cab-
 inet and were sent
 to each church as a
 guide to local MYF
 councils. Highlight-
 ing the Youth Em-
 phasis are special
 activities — the con-
 ference wide Rally
 on the Youth Em-
 phasis during an-
 nual conference, a
 nference sponsored Christian Witness
 eek-end Mission, the inauguration of
 outh page in the *N. C. Christian
 dvocate*, and stress on youth work at
 istrict Christian Education Confer-
 es.

Because of this focus of attention on
 uth work, adult leaders and youth
 e evaluating conference, district,
 d local church MYF programs.
 aknesses are spotted—a decrease in
 ollment, lack of interested adult
 rkers, a lethargy in MYF members
 and plans to strengthen the youth
 rk are being made by youth, coun-
 ors, ministers, and district super-
 endents working together. Increased
 endance and greater enthusiasm is
 ed at conference council meetings,

district council meetings, and sub-
 district meetings. A subdistrict is inter-
 preting the program of the MYF by
 sending a Fellowship Team into every
 church; a local church youth council
 feels an urgency to share Christ with
 others so plans a Christian Witness
 Mission; a young person learns of the
 Lenten Reading Project and organizes
 a cell group for discussion; an adult
 volunteers to help with Youth Activi-
 ties Week; the assembly planning com-
 mittees select themes based on the
 Youth Emphasis.

The Youth Emphasis is being trans-
 lated into witnessing for Christ; plan-
 ning creatively for such local church
 activities as watch night services,
 Christian Witness Missions, Youth
 Activities Weeks; and in strengthening
 the regular activities of the MYF so
 that the youth work will continue to
 grow after the period of so-called
 "special emphasis" is past.

—BY MARION CRAIG

Director of Youth Work, Western
 North Carolina Conference

Time to awake

Rip Van Winkle slept for 20 years,
 and Dr. Hal Luccock recently reminded
 us that while Rip slept the American
 Revolution was fought. So Washington
 Irving's famous character actually
 slept through a revolution!

There is no doubt that the world
 has been in a revolution for the past



Stowe

20 years, and I have
 wondered if the
 Youth Emphasis in
 The Methodist
 Church has been
 asleep during this
 time. It certainly
 seems so. But now
 there is a stirring
 and an awakening,
 and in the next two
 years I am con-
 vinced that the
 Methodist Youth
 Fellowship will reach more youth than
 ever before. I hear echoes of this
 awakening all around, and I find it
 here in St. Luke's, the church of which
 I am pastor.

At a recent meeting of our Commis-
 sion on Education—plus the officers,
 teachers and leaders of our Youth
 Division—three goals were set:

1. To improve the quality of teaching and leadership.

2. To reach more young people with our program. A card file of prospective members is being set up, and the young people have become most enthusiastic in doing this.

3. To expand our program. Last year, by having a high school basketball team in the city league we attracted a new group of boys who have become vitally interested during the past year and are now among our leaders. We have found by organizing new scout troops we have reached a large number of boys that we had not reached before. We have found by organizing a junior high choir and enlarging our senior high choir we can reach young people we have not been reaching.

At St. Luke's, Rip Van Winkle is waking up, and I believe this is happening and will happen all over America. We are going to see some glorious achievements in the youth program of Methodism during this quadrennium. Every church will want to be a part of this new awakening!

—BY W. MCFERRIN STOWE
Pastor, St. Luke's Methodist
Church, Oklahoma City, Okla.

A goal for us

Strengthen faith: this is what the Youth Emphasis is doing in our church. January is the month for our mid-winter retreat. Adult counsellors, MYF members and officers will sleep at the church; eat, work, play, worship, and plan for a whole week-end. In quiet moments as present day disciples, we will gather in small groups for prayer and meditation.

Prayer cell groups have tripled their number since they began last March. They're planning a special lenten study based on the book *I Believe*, by Nevin Harner, and intend to increase the number of cell groups by inviting others to participate. As these teen-agers experience more of God active in their lives, they joyfully reach out, and others come.

Win 500,000 new members to the MYF by June, 1956? As human beings, an impossible assignment; as instruments of God, a worthy goal and a thrilling challenge. For us that means at least 50 youth and 8 adult counselors and teachers. Already our Commission

on Education is at work planning for recruitment and training of the adults needed. Christian Witness area workers (adult and youth together) are prayerfully and thoughtfully planning their visiting.



Mrs. Powell

Him "Above All" is a transforming experience which automatically *improves the MYF* because it improves each member.

—BY MRS. JACK POWELL
Director of Christian Education, Methodist Church, Wauwatosa, Wisc.

Current Materials for Youth Emphasis Planning

Order from the Methodist Publishing House which serves your conference:

I Believe, by Nevin C. Harner
No. 2401-BC, 35¢ per copy; 30¢ each for 10 or more copies.

Handbook of the MYF, No. 2355
BC, 75¢ per copy paper bound, \$1.00 cloth bound.

Your Church Can Win and Hold Young People, edited by N. F. Forsyth, No. 2391-BC, 75¢ per copy.

Roundtable, a monthly periodical for youth and youth leaders. 40¢ per quarter, \$2.00 per annual subscription.

Workers With Youth, a monthly periodical for adult workers with youth. 45¢ per quarter; \$2.25 per annual subscription.

Sourcebook, a quarterly of program suggestions for the Methodist Sunday Evening Fellowship. 45¢ per copy.

Order from the Service Department, P. O. Box 871, Nashville 2, Tenn.:

Your Commission on Education Can Win and Hold Young People, No. 2393-B, free.

Calendar for 1954 for the Youth Emphasis, No. 2402-B, free.

Assumptions about a war

Most Americans since the end of World War II have shared two basic assumptions about World War III.

They have assumed, first, that it is most likely to come through Russia's drive for power, through a military attack. They have also assumed the average American can do little to prevent it except to plead for a powerfully armed United States.

The first assumption has been weakened as the fear of war has begun to diminish. For some time, public figures have been assuring us Russia does not ("now at least") want a general war. These assurances have been weakened by the generally accepted feeling that Communism and Capitalism cannot

side-by-side forever, and the rumormongers that some U.S. leaders privately believe war with Russia is "inevitable."

Now, however, various "experts" are telling us that Russia's new government seeks a period of consolidating or strengthening its political, economic, and territorial positions. When one asks of what Russia suffered in World War II, it is indeed easy to believe the Kremlin does not want to risk another major conflict with atomic weapons thrown in.

Louis Fischer cites these facts in the January *Readers' Digest*: Russia did not strike to sweep Europe just when the continent was weakest, in '45-'47; backed down in the Turkish demands of '45 and the northern Iranian situation of '46 and even failed to take military action against Yugoslavia despite tremendous loss of prestige in '48. It gave up in the face of the Berlin

"airlift" in 1948; and since then, it has failed to support China to the extent required for a Korean victory.

Communist Russia has never been expansionist in the military sense. It has taken new territory only when ripe plums were falling in its lap. It has, rather, concentrated on political and social weapons to expand its power.

... Well, then: if Russia isn't likely to start World War III, what next? The answer: greatest danger of World War III now

lies in pressing Russia to the wall, making it feel too desperate. The USSR has grave problems internally and with the "satellite" nations. These will occupy its full attention . . . if it does not become frightened.

The danger, as this columnist sees it, is not that the U.S. will appear militarily weak. It is, rather, that it will appear too aggressive politically and militarily: that we may, for instance, suffer a depression and turn to greater and greater armaments as an economic cure-all; that we shall become too loudly and openly dependent on the threat of hydrogen bomb warfare against Russia, or more likely China; that super-patriotism with a dictatorial tendency may become allied with the "inevitability" militarists, and that these forces may combine with such tendencies as race hatred and labor-baiting to give us a government truly dangerous to peace—"inward" or "outward."

To prevent World War III, let us do everything in our power to convince Russia we are "strong" in political and social calmness, mutual helpfulness and tolerance within; and that without, we sincerely seek universal disarmament, control of atomic power, and prosperity for the nations of the world.

—BY CLAUD NELSON, JR.



Nelson

Concern Feature

The Youth Emphasis

To strengthen faith:

Methodist youth study their beliefs in a special Lenten reading project. March 2-April 18 thousands will be reading Nevin Harner's *I Believe*.

To win youth to Christ:

Goal for the MYF is to add 500,000 new members to local fellowships by 1956. The call to win youth remains loud and clear.

To improve the MYF:

Every local group seeks ways of touching youth with a vital program so they and more like them can truly discover the will of God and live by it.

What are **you** doing to help?

SAMPLE COPY

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